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17 August 1959

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

OK

Bulgaria: [The Communist leadership reportedly is apprehensive about the upcoming talks between President Eisenhower and Soviet Premier Khrushchev. They fear that any detente between the US and the USSR would affect the internal policies and the stability of the hard-line Bulgarian leadership. Stalinist elements in the other East European satellites may also harbor similar fears.]

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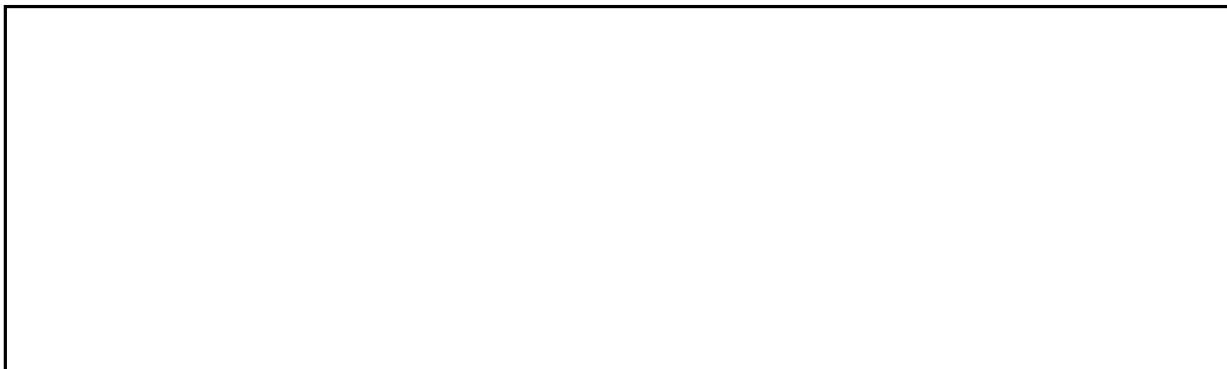
Communist China: Peiping has publicly endorsed the Eisenhower-Khrushchev exchange of visits as a victory for Soviet diplomacy but continues to hold reservations about the exchange leading to any real easing of international tensions.

OK

Foreign Minister Chen Yi on 15 August questioned US sincerity and pointed to American "diehard" attitudes on Berlin, Taiwan, Laos, and other issues. Citing the need to be wary about "American gestures in favor of relaxation," Chen reaffirmed the importance of heightened vigilance and "unremitting struggle" to defeat the Western policy of "war and aggression."

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II. ASIA-AFRICA



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III. THE WEST

UN: [Secretariat officials are promoting the candidacy of Czech UN delegate Jiri Nosek for chairman of the special political committee at this General Assembly in anticipation of his being awarded the presidency of next year's assembly. They consider the past practice of relegating Soviet-bloc candidates to lesser committee chairmanships as inappropriate, especially in view of the present "relaxed" political atmosphere. Soviet spokesmen told a UN official that they would be willing to forego Nosek's election as committee chairman this year in exchange for the presidency next year. Hammarskjold has indicated his preference for an Eastern European as president in 1960.]

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Iceland: Adoption of the constituency-reform law will probably enable the pro-NATO Conservatives and Social Democrats to win a combined majority in the elections scheduled for 25 and 26 October. The Communist-front Labor Alliance, however, is expected to pick up enough seats from the weakened rural Progressives to put the Communists in a strong position to demand representation in the next government.

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Bulgarian Leadership "Dismayed" over Eisenhower-Khrushchev Meeting

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(Khrushchev's discussions with Vice President Nixon and his announced plans to visit the United States have caused "dismay" and "apprehension" among the Bulgarian leaders,

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[This is the first evidence that hard-line Bulgarian leaders, many of whom reportedly have never become completely reconciled to Khrushchev and his relatively moderate policies, would disapprove of any "rapprochement" with the US.]

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[While it is unlikely that Bulgaria's leaders will be replaced, there may be a heightening of party tensions which could break into the open during a series of five central committee plenums scheduled for October 1959 to February 1960.]

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Peiping Calls for Caution in Assessing US Efforts
To Ease Tension

Peiping has officially endorsed the Eisenhower-Khrushchev visits but is pessimistic that they will lead to a real relaxation of international tension. In a speech which contrasts with the tone of recent bloc commentaries, Communist China's Foreign Minister Chen Yi on 15 August condemned the United States for "stubbornly clinging to its policy of aggression" and called for wariness about American "gestures" on relaxation.

Speaking at a North Korean Liberation Day celebration, Chen said the visits--a "victory" for Soviet diplomacy--are supported by the government and people of Communist China. He pointed out that although the US has been "compelled" to accept the visits, "it persists in a diehard attitude" toward the German problems and prohibition of nuclear weapons. The foreign minister accused the US of "aggression, expansion, and cold-war policy" in Far Eastern areas, such as Taiwan and Laos. "In view of these facts," Chen said, "one has reason to be wary about American gestures in favor of relaxation."

Commentary from other bloc countries also has hailed the exchange as a Soviet victory and indicated that relaxation would depend on US actions. The general tone, however, has been more optimistic than Chen's. One recent Moscow broadcast stated, "Just the report of the forthcoming visits immediately led to an obvious improvement in the international climate!" Chen's call for heightened vigilance and "unremitting struggle" to defeat Western "aggression" has not been noted in any other bloc commentary since the visits were announced.

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III. THE WEST

UN Officials Promoting Soviet-bloc Candidate For High UN Elective Office

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[High-ranking officials in the UN Secretariat believe the Soviet bloc should be granted a high elective office at the General Assembly session opening on 15 September. The UN official in charge of assembly affairs told the American delegation he considers such action a "matter of equity" and asked why the Soviet-bloc candidate "should always take what is left." He added that relegation of bloc delegates to lesser committee chairmanships looks inappropriate, especially since parity was granted to the USSR in the ten-nation disarmament group proposed by the foreign ministers at the Geneva Conference. He said that many UN members share these views.]

[UN officials are promoting the candidacy of Czech UN delegate Jiri Nosek for chairman of the special political committee this year, in anticipation of his being awarded the presidency of the General Assembly in 1960. To further this campaign, Czechoslovakia on 13 August requested the assembly to discuss the question of equitable geographical rotation in the election of future presidents. A Soviet spokesman told a UN official the USSR was willing to forego Nosek's chairmanship this year with the understanding he would be elected president next year.]

[UN Secretary General Hammarskjold has indicated his preference for an Eastern European for the position, which goes to Europe next year.]

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Icelandic Parliament Grants Final Approval to Constituency-Reform Bill

Adoption of Iceland's controversial constituency-reform law by a tactical alliance of Conservatives, Communists, and Social Democrats will result in a marked redistribution of power in Parliament. The move enhances the prospects that the Conservative and Social Democratic parties will emerge with a combined majority in the mandatory second general elections, to be held on 25 and 26 October.

Since no single party appears likely to obtain a clear majority, the composition of the future government remains in doubt. The most likely result appears to be a coalition composed of the pro-NATO Conservative and Social Democratic parties, but the Communist-dominated Labor Alliance is certain to demand representation.

While the Communists suffered a setback in the June elections and were unable to arouse voter interest over the issue of US bases in Iceland, their powerful position in the trade union movement gives them a strong bargaining point. Inclusion of the Communists might prove attractive to some Conservative politicians as a means of buying labor peace. The Conservative party leadership, however, insists that cooperation with the Communists is confined to the constituency-reform issue and that no understanding exists with regard to postelection cooperation.

Much depends on the attitude of the small Social Democratic party, which seems likely to emerge in a pivotal position as a result of the elections. The Social Democrats will be under pressure from both the Progressives and the Labor Alliance to join forces to prevent Conservative control of the government.

The Soviet Union has sought to bolster the Labor Alliance's electoral appeal by agreeing to purchase large additional quantities of fish from Iceland. The Icelandic Communist press credits the USSR with "bailing Iceland out" of the difficult economic situation resulting from this year's unusually large catch.

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